



15¢

BATMAN

SEPT.
NO. 215

I-I'VE DONE
AS YOU
COMMANDED!

WAYNE MANOR--
AND EVERYONE
IN IT--HAVE BEEN
DESTROYED!



**CALL
ME
MASTER!**

WRITTEN BY
FRANK
ROBORD

BATMAN

WITH ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

ART BY
IRVY NOVICK
AND
DICK
SPORGIO

BATMAN—
WHY—Z!

POW!

THAT'S THE
WAY IT HAS TO
BE, ROBIN! AN
ORDER IS AN
ORDER!

HAS LAW-AND-ORDER
SOME BENSERK? HAS THE "ORDER"
THAT BRUCE (BATMAN) WAYNE'S
DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO, TURNED INTO A MONSTROUS
TRAVISTY THAT THREATENS TO DESTROY HIM? WHO HAS
COMMANDEERED THE CAPED CRUSADER TO—

"CALL ME MASTER!"

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IN THE OFFICE OF ONE OF
GOTHAM'S LEADING CITIZENS,
J. CRADLE, ESQ. ...



SHORTLY IN THE EXECUTIVE
SUITE OF ANOTHER CIVIC
LUMINARY ANDREW BARCLAY...



AND AGAIN AN URGENT CALL INTERRUPTS
A BOARD MEETING...



THAT EVENING, AT WAYNE MANSION--HOME
OF GOTHAM'S OUTSTANDING YOUNG PHILAN-
THROPIST, BRUCE WAYNE...



HANGING UP, THE MYSTERY-CALLER
DIALS ANOTHER NUMBER...



NO NEED TO WAIT!
LOOK--OUR
FIRST ACTION!

EARS LOGAN
AT THE WHEEL,
WHERE HE GOES
--TROUBLE
FOLLOWS!

FOLLOWED BY
DOUBLE-TROUBLE...US!

DISCREETLY GIVING THE SUSPECT
RAILS-TRUCK A WIDE LEAD...

ONE OF JIM CARROLL'S
STORAGE DEPOTS? AND
ODDS ARE EARS ISN'T
ONE OF HIS BONDED
CARRIERS!

BUT WE
DON'T STRIKE
TILL HE COMES
OUT--RED-
HANDED!

THAT'S THE WAY WE WANT THEM, ROBIN!
THE "BOYS" HAVE GOTTEN AWFUL CUTE
LATELY...

...PULLING
EVERY TRICK IN
THE "CONSTITU-
TIONAL-LIBERTIES"
BAG. BATMAN!
FUNNY--THEY
MOVED IN AWFUL
EASY! AS IF
THE DOOR WERE
OPEN!...

...SO THERE GOES OUR
"PROBABLE-ENTRY" CHARGE!

BUT NOT
OUR "ILLEGAL-
REMOVAL OF
MERCHANDISE"
PLEA! LET'S
HIT EM,
ROBIN!

BATMAN? HEADS UP
BOYS--WE'VE GOT
"MAJOR TRES-
PASSERS" ON OUR
HANDS!

WE HAVE A SLIGHT
DIFFERENCE OF LEGAL
DEFINITIONS, SHISTER!

ZAP!



DESPAIRED MOMENTS LATER...

THERE THEY GO—FREE AND CLEAR! CAN'T UNDERSTAND CARULE HIRING PUNKS LIKE THAT...

...FOR AN AFTER CLOSING-TIME SHIPMENT? STRANGE! AND WALTON HEARD HE WAS DOING ANY REHABILITATION WORK WITH EX-CONS, EITHER!

BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S A PRIME ANOM IN LAW-ENFORCEMENT THAT YOU **CAN'T** PROSECUTE ILL-DOERS---UNLESS THE VICTIM PASSES CHARGES!

AND CARULE SURE DIDN'T ACT LIKE A VICTIM!

SHORTLY... THIS TIME WE'VE GOT A LIVE ONE, ROBIN! UP THERE, IN ANDREW BARCLAY'S MANSION!

...A BLINKING FLASHLIGHT IN HIS STUDY! WINDOW OPEN--LOOKS LIKE...

...WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A---CAT-BURGLAR! SO LET'S MAKE LIKE BATS--- AND "BELL THE CAT!"

BELL? ODD--- WHY DIDN'T THE ALARM-SYSTEM GO OFF WHEN THE CAT ENTERED?

SUDDENLY THE ROOM GOES DARK, AND...

WATCH IT, ROBIN! THIS CAT HAS SHARP CLAWS!

KWEE!
O-CLOSE---

GOT TO GET IN AT HIM!

ROBIN, SWING YOUR CAPE ACROSS THE WINDOW TO DRAW HIS FIRE---



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July 1989 • Model of the Month
'51 Henry J Drag Coupe



GOT HIM,
BATMAN?

HARUMPH!
HE'S GOT ME---
THE IDIOT! TAKE
YOUR HANDS OFF
ME, BATMAN!

MR. BARCLAY
---WHAT IS
THIS?



DOESN'T A DECENT CITIZEN
HAVE A RIGHT ANY MORE
---IN HIS OWN HOUSE---
TO EMPLOY A LOCKSMITH...

TO---HEH!...CRACK
A JAMMED COMBO?
AND WHAT BETTER
MAN TO DO IT, THAN
---"FING-FINGER"
FOWLER?



BUT THAT
OPEN
WINDOW?
THE FLASH-
LIGHT--
MASK?

NO NEED FOR
MY MAN TO
STIKLE IN HERE,
IS THERE? AND
IF HE FEELS
MORE COMFORT-
ABLE WORKING
WITH FLASH AND
MASK...

THAT DOES
IT, MR.
BARCLAY!
OPEN!



A SHORT TIME LATER...

AND EXITING THE
SAME WAY HE
USUALLY COMES!
GUESS AN OLD
"CAT" CAN'T
LEARN NEW
TRICKS!

I'M ALL
FOR THE RIGHTS OF
THE "WORK-
ING MAN!"
BATMAN---
BUT HE COULD
BE MAKING OFF
WITH ALL THE
LOOT IN HIS
TOOL-BAG!



HOPE THIS ISN'T
A TREND, ROBIN!
BECAUSE, IF
HONORABLE
CITIZENS START
COVERING FOR
CRIMINALS...

...WE CAN JUST
FOLD UP OUR
CAPES AND
SILENTLY STEAL
AWAY! BUT, AS
YET, WE HAVE
NO PROOF THAT
"CRIMES" WERE
COMMITTED!



STILL-- I CAN'T BELIEVE
THOSE PUNKS WE RAN
WRO HAD GONE LEGIT! NOR
THAT HONEST BUSINESS-MEN
WRO SUDDENLY GONE APE!

WE'LL-- YOU WON'T
FIND THE JEWEL KING,
CLEAN STEELING VOUCHING
FOR THIS CAPER, BATMAN!

STERLING
GEMS



NOT WITH JIGGER LEADING
THOSE MONEYS GUARDS! I'D
SPOT HIM ANYWHERE!



HOP IT, BOYS---
I'LL COVER!



YOU'LL COVER--THE
PAVEMENT, JIGGER!

I'LL DO A LITTLE
PAVING MYSELF!



AND THIS GAME'S
A SHUT-OUT!

WITH A
SHUT-IN!



THEY'LL KEEP HERE
TILL WE INVESTIGATE
INSIDE!

YOU SURE BIT OFF
A BIG ONE THIS TIME,
JIGGER! HOW COME
YOU GOT SO
FOOLISH!

AWN, IT WAS A LEAD-PIPE
CINCH---TILL YOU HAPPEED
ALONG!



CURIOUS...NO MARKS OF
FORCEFUL ENTRY INSIDE, AND---
THE ENTIRE ALARM SYSTEM
SHUT OFF!

THAT EXPLAINS
HOW THEY JUMPED
THIS GUARD--WITHOUT
FOREWARNING!

AND THE VAULT-ROOM WIDE OPEN---NO SIGNS OF A
MYSTRO BLOW-OUT! JUST
LIKE---LIKE SOMEONE ROLLED
OUT THE RED
CARPET FOR
THEM!



AN INSIDE
JOB?

WHAT BOTHERS
ME IS--BOTH THE
ALARM-SYSTEM AND
THE VAULT LOCK-
TIMER...



...CAN ONLY BE
ACTIVATED BY A
VERY SPECIAL
KEY---HELD
ONLY BY A HIGH
OFFICER OF THE
CONCERN!

IT'S
PRESIDENT
...CLEM
STERLING?!



YES,
STERLING
HERE! YOU,
BATMAN?
WHAT'S
UP?

A SLIGHT CASE OF
YOUR VAULT BEING
STRIPPED! DID YOU
...FOR ANY REASON...

...SWITCH
OFF THE
ALARM-
SYSTEM
AND OPEN
THE VAULT
TONIGHT?



YES---I
DID! ABOUT
AN HOUR
AGO...

BUT FOR THE LIFE
OF ME, I
DON'T
KNOW
WHY!

WHAT?!



CRYPTIC---
BUT STRAIGHT,
MR. STERLING!
NO---THEY
DIDN'T GET A
THING!

NOW GET
SOME SLEEP---
BE BACK AT YOU
TOMORROW WHEN
YOUR HEAD'S
CLEAR!



LATER, EXITING FROM THE SECRET BATCAVE ELEVATOR
INTO WAYNE MANSION...

SURE A PUZZLE, DICK!
THREE OF MY CLOSEST
ASSOCIATES IN
BOTHAM'S CIVIC-
CONSCIENCE COUNCIL...

...AND THEY
DISPLAY THE MOST
DISTINCTLY
ANTI-CIVIC
BEHAVIOR, ALL
IN ONE NIGHT!



HE MEAN?

EMIL HARTZ ALLOWED HIS FIFTY-FIVE PENTAL CARS TO BE STOLEN!

MYRON MYCROFT GOT TO WITH HIS PRICELESS CHRONO-TIME COLLECTION!

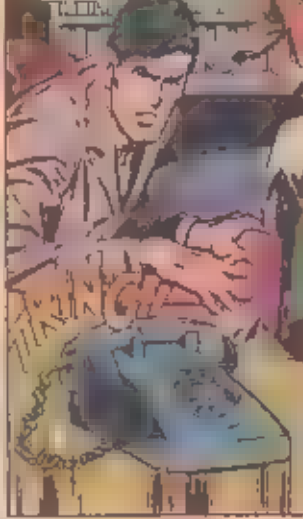
LAWRENCE NELSON LEE-LIVE WITH HIS PRE-1915 STAMP COLLECTION BUT WHY GO ON? ELEVEN GOOD MEN ON WING OR HE RING CRIME IT FIDURISH -- UNTOUCHED.

RI-T WHY WHY? WHAT UNKNOWN PRESSURE DID THEY UNDER-445 UNDER WORLD-ATTEN TO THEM S-T BLACKMAIL? EXTORTION? HYPNOSIS?

R- IF THEY CLAM UP SAY THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT COMPULSION URGES THEM TO DO THIS



E-EVEN MEN TRIED AND TRUE PILLARS OF GOTHAM! S-O-ET MUY IS IT POSSIBLE?



YES THIS IS BRUCE WAYNE! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?



THIS IS WHAT YOU WILL DO FOR ME

AND AS A STRANGE & SHAKEN BRUCE HANGS UP

OUR MYSTERY CALLER WHO DID HE HE DID HE

-I DON'T KNOW BUT I DO KNOW WHAT I MUST DO

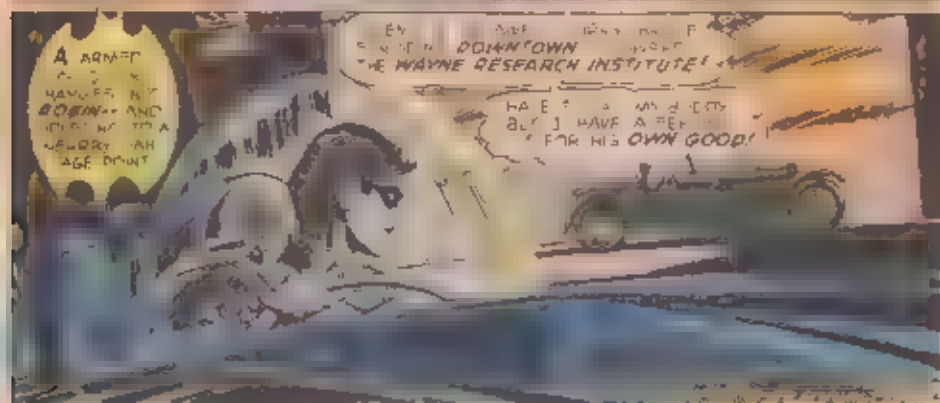
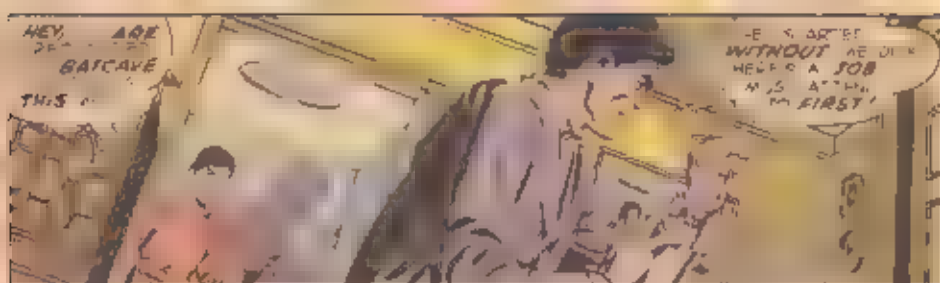


THAT NIGHT AFTER A CURIOUSLY SWEET DINNER

SOMETHING'S BEEN BLESSING BRUCE EVER SINCE THAT PHONE CALL BUT I CAN'T OIL IT OUT OF HIM BETTER PRETEND NOTHING'S WRONG.



WE'D BETTER GET READY FOR OUR NIGHT PATROL BRUCE



THE SHARPEST SMUGGLERS OF PHARMACEUTICALS ARE ARRIVING

CAN'T BE HE
BECAUSE I KNOW

THE SHARPEST SMUGGLERS OF PHARMACEUTICALS ARE ARRIVING

WE EMM W T HIER AN SPEL SNA
C N A S P E C H E

WHIA?

ROBINT

RIGHT NOW?

WAS 5 BEFUSE TO
TUNE ON WITH
OUT A HEECH

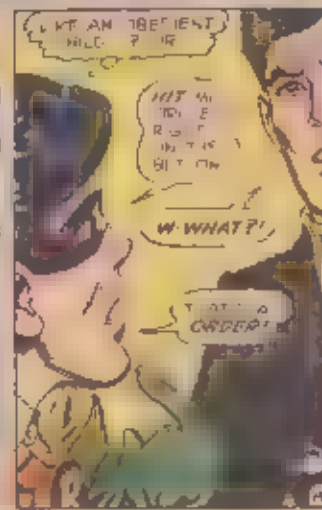
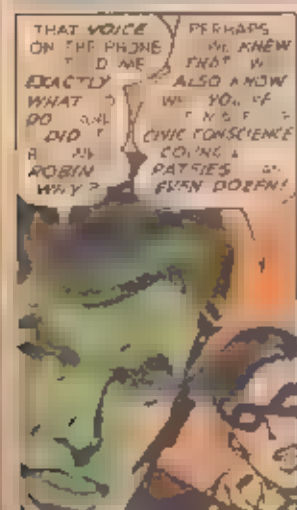
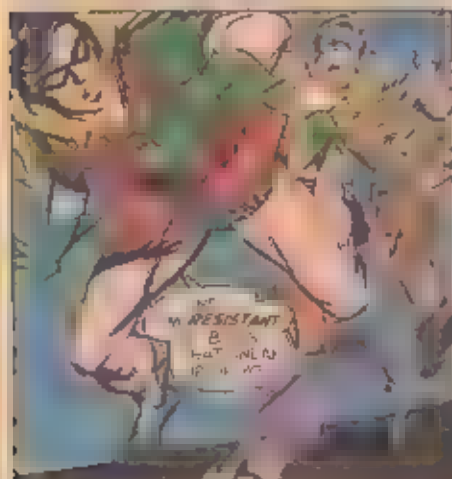
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ONE MY
PORT

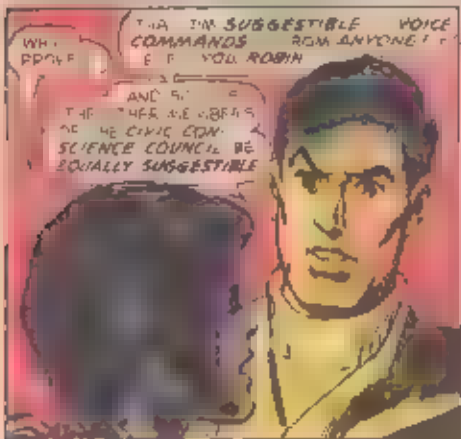
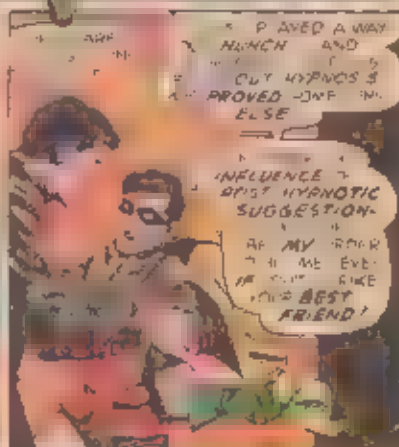
WHERE ROBIN IS
BATMAN "N" AF
FAR BEHIND!

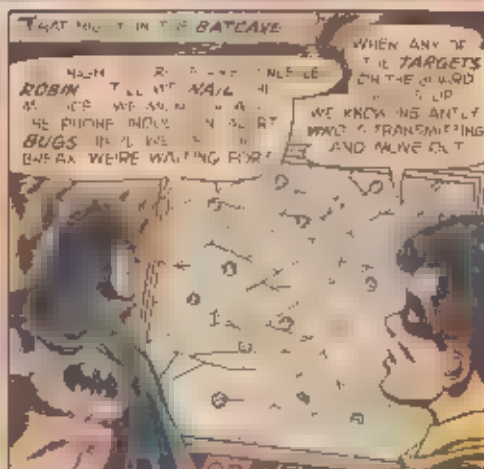
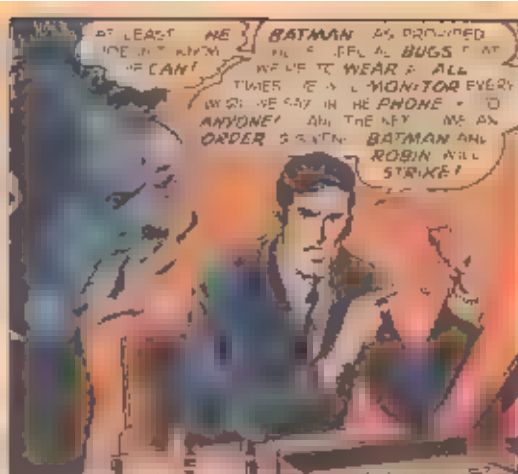
BUT WE GOT
THE CURE OR
THIS A'L
V RUS

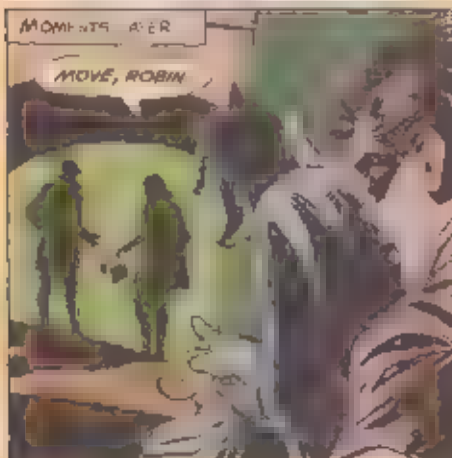
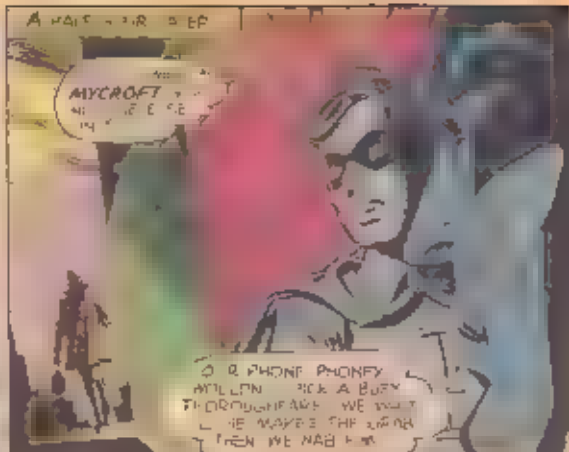
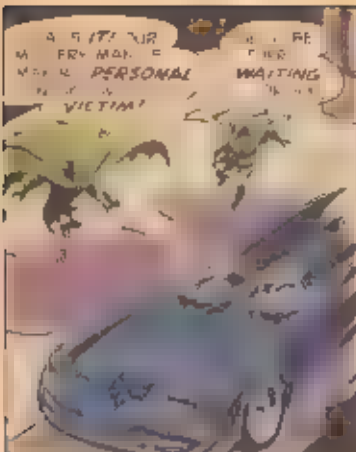
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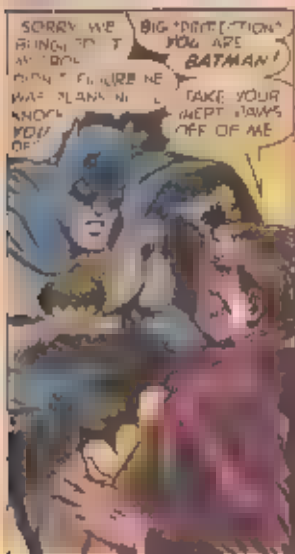
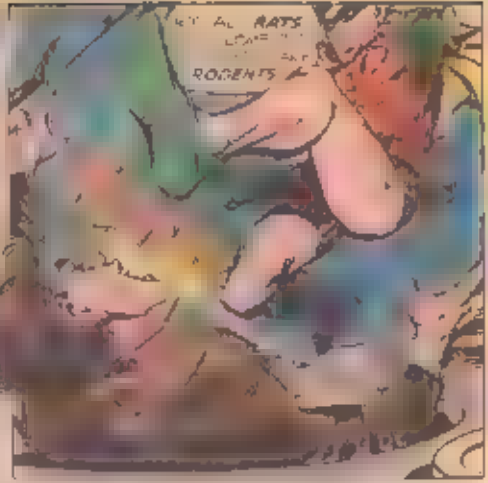
ART EXHIBIT













BUT IF I COULD
CONTROL BATMAN?
WHAT A TRIUMPH!
MUST BE A
TEST-- I RE
SURE HE'S NOT
TRICKING ME

WE'RE HAULING
T-S RINK
DOWN TO
PULL H.Q.
MAYBE HE
TALK YOU BET TO
GET SOME SLEEP
MY DEAR



A 5:10 PM LATER AT 7:15 PM B OWER 2:15 PM

IT'S NEVER RE-MA
UNLESS HE'S WITH AN
COMPLETE CATCH

A NATURAL
BATMAN IN THE THAT
TO FRIEND
BRUCE WAYNE?

IN MANY WAYS WHEN BATMAN HAD
BUT HE WAS A TALKER A BETTER SOME
TIMES EVEN SUPERMAN



INSURED
H.Q. TO
PULL H.Q.



AS I KNOW WHERE TO
MAY BE

BATMAN

THE
MY MEN
UP



AND A BATMAN SENSES
SILENT BUT INTENTLY

AND I MUST BE
DONE BY MIDNIGHT!
YOU ARE THE ONLY
NO ONE, UNDER AND

PERFECTLY
I SHALL
COMPLY

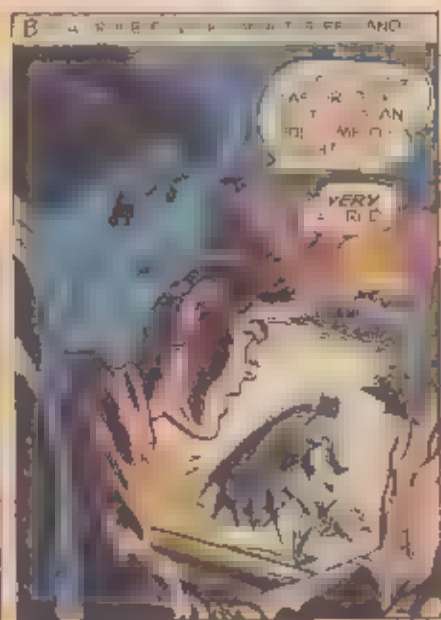
WHO KNEW
THE BATMAN
HERE NOW AND THE
SAME LIKE THAT
AM OVER HIM--
WHEN IS IT
LAST CALL?



ON RETURN TO THE
BETRAY

IT THINGS
MORE WE
CAN DO
TODAY
BATMAN

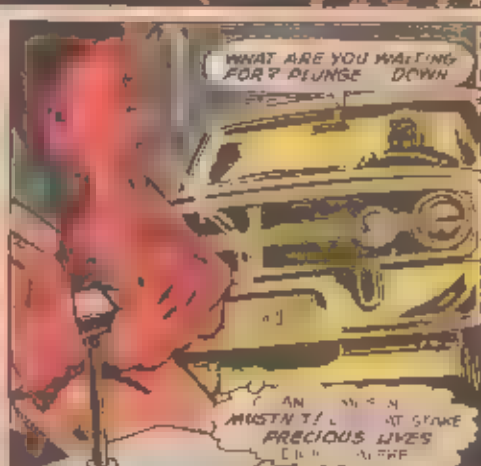
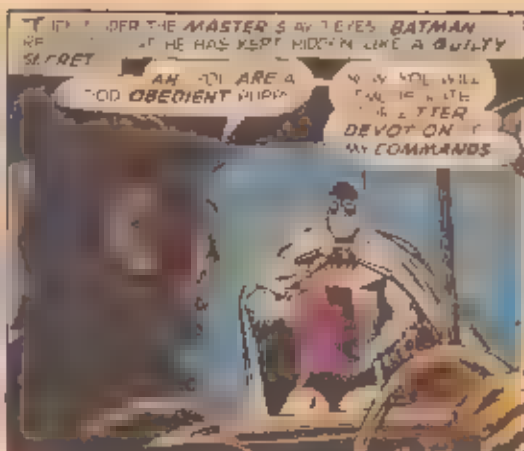
NO THING
MORE YOU
AN OLD
DO TO
TO BED
I'VE GOT
SOME ER
GARDENING



BATMAN'S WATER AND

AS FOR AN
TO ME

VERY
RIDE





YOU LEARNED YOU WERE WEARING ONE OF MY MICRO-WAVE WILL-POWER NULLIFIERS... AND REMOVED IT!

BUT THAT KNOWLEDGE WON'T HELP YOU NOW!



WEARING ONE? ONE... WHAT? WHAT DEVILISH DEVICE DID MYCROFT PLANT ON ME... AND WHEN?

I DON'T NEED A WILL-POWER DESTROYER TO DESTROY YOU NOW, I'D DIE, BATMAN!



DROP THAT GUN!

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! MYCROFT... THOOD... AND BRILLIANT INVENTIVE FOUNDER OF THE FINANCIAL EMPIRE AND PRODUCT THAT BEARS MY NAME!

NEGATIVE, MYCROFT! NOW I GIVE THE ORDERS!

YOU'RE---GIVING ME ORDERS? NO--- YOU COULDN'T HAVE PLANTED ONE OF MY OWN DEVICES ON--- ME!



YOUR DOUBT IS ALL I NEEDED.



...TO PROVE I'M NOT TAKING ORDERS FROM YOU ANYMORE--- MASTER!

MOMENTS LATER...

MYCROFT, I'M NEVER WOULD'VE GUESSED-- BUT WE DID GUESS YOU WERE ACTING UNDER ORDERS, BATMAN.

AND BEGINNING YOUR REASON, SIR-- WE REPLANTED HARMLESS FIREWORKS AND SMOKE-BOMBS TO SIMULATE A MASSIVE EXPLOSION!



WHEN WE FOLLOWED YOU AND DUG UP WHAT YOU'D 'PLANTED' AROUND WAYNE MANOR!

THEN, IF THEY COVERED FOR YOU---YOU WERE STILL UNDER MY CONTROL, WHEN...

HOW DID YOU...?



REALIZED-- TOO LATE-- THAT YOUR "PRODUCT" WAS SOMEHOW THE KEY TO EVERYTHING! I DROPPED IT OFF MY WHIST BEFORE I SLUGGED YOU...



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LEWIS BRIDGES CORPORATION, a Division of Lewis Products Co., 125 East 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016

Dear Editor:

I am writing for no other reason than to tell you how much I admire the artistic team of Irv Novick and Joe Giella. I had never heard Irv's solo work too much, but he is such a perfect penman for Joe that I dare say even Bob Kane and Carmine Infantino were merely closet clowns. One case is the upper outside corner of pages 4 and 5 (*Batman* #211), on which one will find two of the most perfect renditions of Dick Grayson ever seen. It's as though the ink was put over a photograph.

Something I'd like to mention to Irv is the master of *Batman*'s jaw. I appreciate the more boy-like quality that was the trademark of the stern jaw of *Batman*, which Irv is slowly bringing back. However, I would still like to see a more or less complete return to the features of the old *Batman*. Think of it not as a jaw, Irv, but a pair of 90 degree angles you're drawing for algebra class. I know some readers consider this type of jaw as comical and non-existent in reality. I don't know. You late and great John Larkin, actor extraordinaire, was a box-jawed dream as a *Batman* portrayer.

Well worth noting when mentioning the good old days are scripts like "*Batman's Big Blow-Off*." If the "real" *Batman* ever does return, it will be through no small contribution from Frank Robbins. As a *Bat*-writer, Frank's the one!

—JARY SKINNER, Columbus, Ohio

(By one of those quirks in editorial timing—just when such praise is lavished on the Novick-Giella team—his two pages up with a switch in inkers! We're hopefully anticipating approval of Dick Giordano's stylish treatment—a preliminary move in the BIG CHANGE that's coming to *Batman* in the December issue! You'll have to see it to believe it! More arduous comments follow in the next letter.—Editor)

Dear Editor:

Read *Batman* #211. The quality of the story continues to amaze me. You seem to be getting quite a balance of action, mystery, and melodrama in your latest bunch.

In 211's "*Batman's Big Blow-Off*" you even had a moral at the ending. Imagine, a moral, after I thought you did well with the main story itself, using an all-modern theme out of today's headlines. You're doing well, sir, on the stories.

As for the art, I'm still a little finicky. It's nice to see that Giella's mastered the square head. However, I notice that your artists are starting to give *Batman* a very long neck and a somewhat basketball-type player body. This will never do! I would like to remind you that *Batman* has a height of 6'-0"—no more. He has a perfectly developed body—not overly muscular as your artists try to show him. In other words, you know the muscle is there, but it doesn't spring out at you as it does on a Steve Reeves type. I believe if your artists studied *Batman* number 5 for a couple of hours, they'd get the idea how *Batman* should look.

—Pittsburgh Sun

(*Exc. Pittsburgh Sun—whatever you may be—is the *Batman* of three decades ago the very same *Batman* that should be doing his thing today—and still be the*

same three decades from now—in the year 2000!—Editor)

Dear Editor:

With *Batman* 211, I feel more and more that Frank Robbins used to read the *Bat-Man* as a kid, and recently picked up the habit again (after some years) when he first began to write for DC. "*Batman's Big Blow-Off*" stunk. *Batman* has been around for thirty years and has had more than his share of identity cover-ups. Yet this story didn't show it. *Batman* would not, at this point of his career, even think about revealing his identity for convenience. Having Dick be the one to remind Bruce of the dangers of acting as *Batman* in public got me tick.

Criminals would not go off to shoot the four suspects; at least not until which one was *Batman* had actually been revealed. If *Batman* had ignored the exposé, *It's Your Bug* would have had to admit its error, and no one would get killed. If you don't see my argument, let me point out another flaw. Now that everyone knows that *Batman* posed as Howard Hayes, the threat against the four people still remains.

—HARVEY SOBEL, Commack, N.Y.

(You base your arguments on the way you would *comprehensibly* act under given circumstances. Why shouldn't *Batman* *reasonably* from time to time the advantages and disadvantages of revealing his secret identity? Secondly, there are criminals of all frames of mind—and who is to more categorically how some of them would "use" their killing off of *Batman*? Finally, since the exposé was revealed as a phoney, it is evident that the four *Batman* "suspects" would be cleared.—Editor)

Dear Editor:

Batman was actually going to divulge his Bruce Wayne identity! That's something. Only, did he really want to? Notice how Bruce kept on thinking of the benefits of divulging his I.D. It could be that he was looking at the bright side to buck out the disadvantages. What good is it to be something but keep thinking of its bad side? If something must be done, make the best of it, right? That might be why Bruce tried to counter Dick's morbid thoughts of added glamour and an easier life. But even he can't shut out the truth of life and he has to face the cold facts of added danger, accounting for the food-poisoning thought.

Another possibility is that Bruce wouldn't mind giving up his cover. Perhaps for more fame or maybe it's because he's sick of hiding. For thirty years he's had to duck behind alleys, ~~over~~ for his other identities, etc. I don't think that if I were in his shoes, I'd dig doing what he has had to do for all those years!

Another reason could be that he'd like to be widely known. How many millionaires have you heard of? Perhaps quite a few, but there are probably a lot of them you haven't heard of. If you were a guy like *Batman*, wouldn't you like everyone to know? Deep down inside, Bruce may feel the same way.

—JOE RUNAK, Montville, N.J.

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